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ABSTRACT

This program is a cooperative arrangement between the College and a consortium of 53 school districts--over one-half the districts in Idaho--to train longtime residents who have at least 2 years of college education who would remain in their districts to provide continuity to each school's professional staff. The curriculum consists of over 200 programed modules composing 12 courses which can be completed in the local community with off-campus supervision from the College of Education. University credit is given at the successful completion of all programed courses. Approximately 10 hours per week of varied observation and participation experiences are individually organized for each candidate in local schools. Master teachers in each school were trained to supervise the field experiences and professional study of candidates. Courses needed by trainees to fulfill deficiencies in major and minor teaching areas are made available by extension services, correspondence study, or summer courses. Evaluation of the program's first year by an outside team indicated that it was successful in achieving its goal. Plans for the second year included the use of microteaching and the minicourses developed by the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development. (RT)

TEACHERS FOR THE RURAL WORLD

Introduction

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The Teachers for the Rural World Program at Idaho State University is a cooperative arrangement between the College of Education and the consortium of fifty-three school districts (which includes over one-half the districts in Idaho). The program is in response to the call for change in teacher education to prepare teachers for the "rural world."

The Need for Change

The school districts participating in this project had an average of 20 per cent turnover for the 1968-69 school year; one school reached 32 percent of the professional staff being new in the district for 1969-70. The State Board of Education in Idaho has granted authorization to use non-certified personnel in increasing numbers. Records show approximately 169 sub-standard certificates in the 1968-69 school year or 12 higher than the previous school year. In addition to this, there were approximately 1,700 individuals teaching on the provisional certificate. This certificate was granted during a period of emergency and was valid for a three year period and may be renewed when the holder has completed not less than 18 semester credit hours of college work, leading to the satisfaction of the requirements for a standard elementary certificate.

Areas of critical shortage included all levels with special emphasis in the elementary grades. Many secondary schools reported shortages in the subject fields such as instrumental and vocal music, math, special education, art, and some sciences.

The modal age for women in 1967-68 in Idaho schools was in the 56-60 age group with large numbers in the 61-65 age group. There were 1,400 teachers

in the 56 and over age bracket. Idaho employs an approximate total of 8,000 teachers in the public schools.

According to figures available, in the spring of 1966 some 742 individuals graduated from Idaho institutions of higher education, preparing to meet certification standards. There were 1,462 new teachers employed in the state that fall or about twice as many as were prepared by Idaho institutions. Best estimates indicate that 50 percent of those graduating either left the state or did not teach, leaving a sizable gap between graduates and need.

The need for certified teachers for rural Idaho schools has existed for many years. The balance of this report is a description of how the College of Education provided quality instruction for individuals who would be employed and remain in rural Idaho schools as fully certified teachers.

Development of Objectives

In the spring of 1969, Dr. Richard L. Willey, Dean of the College of Education at Idaho State University, met with selected superintendents representing the fifty-three participating local school districts. From the results of this meeting they agreed that each district had a number of long time residents who were outstanding prospects for teachers in their schools but were unable to meet standards for teacher certification in the state of Idaho. They concluded that if these people were given assistance to meet teacher certification standards, they would remain in these districts and provide continuity to each school's professional staff. In many of the rural school districts of Idaho as many as 40 percent of all elementary teachers hold sub-standard (provisional) teaching certificates made necessary by isolation and other factors.

Program Objectives

The program objectives were designed (1) to prepare individuals for teacher

certification who already possess a baccalaureate degree and/or a master's degree, (2) to prepare individuals to meet university requirements for the baccalaureate degree and teacher certification who are of late junior or senior standing.

It was further determined that the students trained under the program should fulfill all requirements expected of students in the regular College of Education program. In addition, a quality program was necessary which would offer realistic experiences in the "rural world." The bond between theory and practice must become well established and take advantage of recent educational research.

Rationale for Change

The target group of students represented people who could complete certification requirements within one academic year and one summer or less. They were also people whose family and community commitments made it extremely difficult for them to return to campus for extended periods of time. This became the prime reason for not attaining teacher certification through the regular university program.

A basic program, therefore, needed to be developed which would allow curricular work to be carried on within the local communities.

THE PROGRAM

The program which would provide meaningful training for the target individuals was jointly planned by selected staff from the College of Education and representative superintendents from the fifty-three participating districts.

It was not simply that of putting trainees in college classrooms for one semester and in student teaching the next semester. It was designed to incorporate the public school setting and teaching experience with, and directly related to, the professional course work. Individual curriculum planning was based upon the

needs of each trainee; directed to the overall objective of a meaningful foundation, to prepare each individual for "teaching in the rural world".

Programmed Instruction

Individual programmed course syllabi were designed for twelve separate professional courses which included over 200 units or modules of work offered in the College of Education. The preparation of syllabi was completed by those instructors who regularly taught these courses on campus. The design of the syllabi provided for the utilization of the latest methods and technologies. Included were such innovations as: interaction analysis, research utilizing problem solving, Taba method, micro-teaching, mini-course materials, the talking page, video taped courses and seminars. University credit was given at the successful completion of all programmed courses. This work was completed in the local community involving off-campus supervision from the College of Education.

Observation and/or Participation

Programmed instruction evolving around actual public school experiences became the focal point of the program. The types of observation and/or participation experiences evolve around the available public school facilities. Observation and participation experiences included assignments to at least three different grade levels. Classroom activities included making bulletin boards, studying cumulative records, making charts, checking written work, operation of technological equipment as well as planning, presentation, and evaluation of classroom lessons. Participants work with students in large and small groups in classroom settings as well as providing assistance to individual students. Continued observation and/or participation experiences result in assignments to the school lunch program, administration, ancillary

personnel, special programs of the school district, and to the custodial maintenance staff. Students also attend professional meetings and at least one school board meeting. Each student keeps a daily log of experiences and spends a minimum of ten hours per week engaged in observation and/or participation activity. No university credit is given directly for this experience as it is supplemental to credit given for the completion of course syllabi.

Component Course Work

Courses needed by trainees to fulfill deficiencies in major and minor teaching areas were made available to trainees by extension services, correspondence study, and returning to campus for a semester or summer session. The brief return to campus was not so difficult as much of each individual's program could be completed while at home.

Provision for Instructional Staff

A university staff member (Project Administrator) was assigned to work daily with trainees in the school districts. His major responsibility was that of instruction and coordination of instruction by staff from the College of Education and local school districts. His secondary responsibility was that of general program administration.

College of Education Staff

The following staff from the College of Education carried and shared instructional responsibility with the Project Administrator:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COURSE OR COURSES</u>
Wilma A. Benintendi, M.A.	Education 101, 321, 322
William Baller, Ph.D.	Education 201
Thomas E. Edgar, Ed.D.	Education 201
Arthur C. Judd, D.Ed.	Education 486, 487

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COURSE OR COURSES</u>
Arthur P. Lloyd, Ph.D.	Education 201
Melvin E. Rexroat, Ed.D.	Education 313, 331, 332
Earl Lower, Ed.D.	Education 201
Loren L. Scott, Ed.D.	Education 315
Ernest R. Rowe, Ed.D.	Education 401
Richard L. Willey, Ed.D.	Education 451, 491

The Master Teacher

Master teachers were identified within one public school and served a dual role in the instructional program. They taught the functions of actual classroom procedures as well as sharing the responsibility for professional course work.

The trainees learned more than actual classroom procedures through shadowing several master teachers. Shadowing itself is an extension and deepening of the observation and participation experiences. It entails spending long hours in the company of master teachers who possess knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are worthy of examination in some depth by the trainee. Through seminars students met to compare notes. ("Who have you got this semester?" "Well, let's see, I've got Jones first, then Johnson and Dotson. Who have you got?"). Learning is accomplished by taking people as well as college credits.¹

Master teacher competencies were developed by the College of Education through half-day workshops and courses designed for supervision of student teachers. Individual informal conferences were held throughout the year by staff from the College of Education and the master teachers.

¹Allen, Dwight W., and Hawkes, Glenn W., "Reconstruction of Teacher Educational and Professional Growth Programs or How the Third Little Pig Escaped the Wolf," Phi Delta Kappan, September, 1970--p.p. 4-12.

EVALUATION

Description of Students

Over one hundred fifty preliminary applications for the program were screened by the College of Education. Of this number, forty-five were selected for interviews and the administration of a dogmatic scale. On the basis of the interview and testing, twenty people were selected to participate in the program and five additional people were chosen as alternates. A final interview was held with the selected people upon their entrance into the program.

Twenty students were accepted and completed the program during the first year of operation. Twelve of the twenty people held the baccalaureate degree and one of the twelve held a master's degree. The remaining eight people completed the baccalaureate degree during the program. All twenty students did complete their program and received standard teacher certification.

The following information is offered in description of the students involved in the program:

- (1) There were nineteen women and one man.
- (2) The grade point average upon admission into the program ranged from a high of 3.89 to a low of 2.50 for a mean g.p.a. of 3.03.
- (3) The mean age of the students was 40 years old, ranging from a high of 53 years to a low of 22 years.
- (4) The grade point average earned during training ranged from a high of 4.00 to a low of 2.76 for a mean of 3.70.
- (5) A total of 408 credits were earned during the program by the twenty people ranging from a high of 33 credits to a low of 6 credits. The mean credit load was 20.4 credits per student.
- (6) Nine students were in the elementary education program and eleven were in the secondary.
- (7) Secondary majors were as follows: Three in home economics, two in business education, two in social science, and two in English.
- (8) Sixteen of the twenty students completing the program accepted teaching contracts in the training public schools. Of the remaining four, one is

teaching in a business college, one is teaching in an elementary parochial school, one is substituting, and one left the state during the summer and is unemployed.

OTHER EVALUATIONS

The program is under constant internal evaluation from the superintendents, higher education at Idaho State University, master teachers, trainees, the project administration, and has received external evaluation by a team. Many changes have been incorporated within the project after the completion of the first year. All programmed syllabi were given a complete revision based upon the experiences gained from the first years operation. Funds were redirected to purchase new teaching materials, but these items, due to rigid budget limitations remain in short supply.

The following are some of the highlights excerpted from the evaluation of the program by an outside evaluation team at the end of the first year of operation. The evaluators included a public school superintendent, a dean of a College of Education and an assistant dean of a College of Education. These comments are verbatim and follow from the first page to the last in each case.

General Evaluator's Comments About the Program

The program was obviously cooperative. The top administrative personnel were most cooperative and seemed satisfied with the program. Master teachers and principals displayed a real feeling of responsibility for the program. The evidence was ever present that excellent rapport had developed among all personnel involved in the program. The cooperation of teacher, principals, and the University's in-teacher training is most necessary. I feel this program demonstrates that it can be done.

The syllabi developed by the university professors were well done. Learning was accomplished through new individualistic approaches and trainees were very

enthusiastic.

The evidence that teacher training is best done when the "real world" is a definite part of the classroom was so strong, that it is hoped some way will be found to strengthen this feeling in every community of local school responsibility toward teacher training.

The development of the syllabus approach to impart the academic material area for the teacher training program was surprisingly well done. For a first attempt the Idaho State University professors should be commended here.

Many new concepts were in operation. Selecting local people to be trained locally has many obvious advantages. Eighteen of the twenty people will probably teach in their local community.

From a public school superintendent's point of view, this teacher training program has a great deal of merit.

The academic courses taught via the syllabi were more meaningful and valuable to the trainee than the conventional methods.

This program has been extremely well conducted by a very able administrator who has good support from the university and the public schools. What I am saying is that it is a good program, but the excellent results must be attributed basically to good administration.

The administrators of the fourth district and the College of Education at Idaho State University deserve commendation for their efforts in attempting a new approach to the preparation of quality teachers. The idea of individualized preparation of teachers is very noteworthy and achieved fruition for twenty teachers during this year.

Without question, the portion of the objective related to meaningful classroom experiences was very successful. This particular point, a variety of meaningful

experiences, was stressed by a majority of the interns as a high point in their internship. Many of the regular teachers stated they wished they knew as much as the interns about the total school operation.

These interns felt confident that they could begin teaching next year without the frustrations and anxieties of many first year teachers.

The stipend for the interns was considered as essential for attendance in only two cases, the remainder of interns stated they would have participated regardless.

In questioning the interns, it was their belief that the individualized courses met their felt needs in teacher as well as certification requirements.

Idaho State University is to be commended for their attempt to move in the direction of individualized instruction.

In practically every instance, the administration issued praise for the intern and considered the school fortunate in securing the intern's service as a teacher for next year.

The outstanding feature of this program is the fact that the teacher preparation program was conducted entirely off-campus. The local school districts became the laboratory for teacher preparation. Idaho State University's College of Education, through its administrative staff and faculty, has developed an outstanding model for off-campus teacher preparation. They are to be congratulated for developing this project.

A second commendable attribute of this program was the fact that each candidate has prepared for him, an individualized program for teacher preparation. This was not mass education. The project is to be commended for achieving this most important objective.

Commendation should go to the administrators, staff and master teachers in

in the local school districts which actively participated in the program. These people really prepared an individualized project for each candidate.

One of the excellent aspects of this project was the high enthusiasm and morale of all of those that participated in the program. It was a pleasure to see that even school boards were well informed about this project and were desirous that it continue.

General comments on things needing to be improved or changed:

- (1) Although the project planned to acquaint the candidate with new technological procedures, there was very little evidence that such had been put into effect in the participating districts. Most of the "equipment" in use was conventional in nature and did not involve new approaches to teacher education.
- (2) It is our feeling, after talking with the teacher candidates, that they desired more personal contact with the university faculty who participated in the program.

While the three foregoing pages do not constitute the entire evaluation they do capture the spirit of the evaluation.

Concerning criticism number one (1): The original program as written and planned was to include micro-teaching, Far West Mini-Course and other technological devices and materials. This was cut from the budget. No school district or the cooperating agency have these materials available. Hence, there is a good and real reason for this criticism. It is hoped that the project in its second year can purchase and obtain these instructional materials. Funds remaining in the budget would have covered the requests and original purpose of the program to include micro-teaching and the Mini-Course.

Concerning criticism number two (2): The project was housed in Twin Falls - 120 miles from Idaho State University. Distance alone created part of the problem. The second cause was intended. Each instructor and the Project Director wrote into each course the involvement with faculty members. A significant

portion of consulting time remains in the budget unused. The revision of course requirements will take into account and make needed changes in this comment.